McCall's Rules

OF THE

Cock Pit

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MATCHING COCKS FOR MAINS.

No description of cocks will be taken in matching them in mains. nor shall parties be required to show a cock before being ordered to the pit by the judge. In order to assit parties in their private cock houses, cocks should be placed in coops in rotation from bottom to top weight, and the weight of each cock, even to a fractional part of an ounce, should be plainly marked on each coop just prior to the commencement of the main. Coops should be numbered in rotation in which each cock of each party is placed, and each cock should be known by the number which is marked on the coop. This is only offered as a suggestion and to facilitate matters. Correct tested scales weighing within a quarter of an ounce, and all recording weights alike should be used by the judge, and both parties. The judge shall always weigh each and every cock at actual weight, even to a fractional part of an ounce. Actual weight is where the beam on the scales balance without touching upper or lower rest. At a time agreed upon, just before the commencement of the main, both parties shall turn over to the judge a list written in ink, giving each cock's exact weight, and the number by which each cock shall be known. Then the judge and both

parties shall match all the cocks that are fought in main from these two lists. All cocks of equal weights are matched, then those with difference in weight, commencing with the smallest difference first, and afterwards those within two ounces. After all the matches in main are made, each party or a friend of each party, shall draw off from this match-list, a copy match-list written in ink, giving the exact weight and numbers of each and every pair of cocks that are matched and are to be fought in the main. Then each party shall sign in ink his name on his own match-list, which shall be exchanged then and there between the parties, viz: A, will hand to B, his prepared match-list, and B will hand to A his prepared match-list. The judge shall be provided with an exact copy of each of these two match-lists, and all interested shall examine and see and agree on the correctness of these three match-lists, and by which the cocks shall be ordered to the pit for exhibition and for battle. Parties shall decide by the toss of a coin whether the fighting shall commence from the bottom or top weight. If the main is to be fought in one day, of course the match-list shall include all cocks' weights and numbers that are to be fought in the main. If the main is to be a contest between twenty-one (21) cocks each, that may match, and is to be fought in two days, then on the first day, a

list giving only ten (10) cocks' weights and numbers, commencing from bottom weight, shall be furnished. The cocks that match from the list of ten (10) shall be fought on the first day. On the next day, the remaining eleven (11) cocks given in list, and that match, shall be fought. The fighting shall always start from either bottom or top weights of each match-list, and the cocks shall be fought in rotation as regards upward or downward weights, to the end of main. If the main is to be fought in the open, without shelter or protection from weather, that may be threatening, by agreement, the cocks can be weighed before being heeled; but in this instance, each and every cock shall be heeled in public at the pit side, and in front of the judge immediately after being weighed. The judge shall order the cocks to the pit, and call out, viz.: First battle, A. No. 1; weight, 4.10—B. No. 1; weight, 4.10. Second battle: A. No. 2; weight, 4.12 1-4—B. No. 2; weight, 4.13 1-4. Third battle: A. No. 4; weight, 4.14 1-2—B. No. 5; weight, 5.00 1-4. Fourth battle: A. No. 6; weight, 5.00 3-4—B. No. 7; weight, 5.01. And so on to the end.

Rule 1.—A single judge can be decided upon, or each party can appoint a judge and together agree upon a referee.

Rule 2.—The judge shall stop the progress of any fight that shows clearly is being fraudulently conducted, and declare all

bets off.

Rule 3.—If a pitter should forfeit the fight by acting contrary to the rules, after the fight has commenced, then by-bets are also forfeited.

Rule 4.—Before cocks are heeled for battle, the judge shall order both pitters to step into the pit and hold their cocks in view of spectators for a few moments; thereby giving every one a chance to see the cocks, and time to place their bets on their choice whilst cocks are being heeled.

Rule 5.—The judge should be extremely careful in rendering a decision on a foul. Unintentional violation of the rules may be overlooked if same has not affected the final result.

Rule 6.—All heels that are round from the socket to the point are fair. A broken gaff cannot be replaced during a fight.

Rule 7.—Pitters will be allowed to sponge cocks' heads and legs, or moisten their throats with water or Saliva between pittings. Nothing but plain water shall be used, and both pitters shall use water from the same bucket. Clucking to cocks and blowing on cocks by pitters in battle is not allowed.

It is not permisible to use anything on the cocks' feathers before or after being brought into the pit. A pitter can clean gaffs, sling blood, take dirt or feathers out of a cock's mouth, or from around his head

between pittings.

Pitters shall do their own nursing and fannings of cocks. Outsiders shall not assist in fanning.

Rule 8.—When pitters enter the pit with their cocks, and at all pittings, the judge shall command, "Get Ready,"—then wait as near five second as possible, and the command, "Pit." Pitters must step back quickly after pitting the cocks, and must stand six feet from their cocks during the fighting at all times. A pitter shall not advance or walk around his cocks until a blow is passed.

If the cocks in battle, crowd and advance on a pitter's required distance of six feet from the cocks, then the pitter shall promptly step back to required distance of six feet.

Rule 9.—Cockers can use their own judgment in trimming feathers off a cock for battle; but trimming a cock's head, and around his head of feathers, a skin-like trim, is not allowed. Nor shall a cock's hackle feathers be cut at all; but cocks can be fought with ragged hackles, not purposely made so.

Rule 10.—In hack fighting, if an attempt is made to change a cock after a match is made, or an exchange is made, and not detected until the fight is in progress or over, the offending party forfeits the fight.

Rule 11.—In mains, if cocks are weigh-

ed before being heeled, they shall be required to make stipulated weights given in match-lists, or forfeit the battle. If the cocks are weighed after each battle, as soon as the fight is over and the gaffs are cut off, then if the winning cock should weigh even a fractional part of an ounce more than the stipulated weight given by the party in the match-list, such winning cock shall be declared the loser. The cock that has been apparently defeated wins the battle if not a run away, or a dead cock. In case both cocks are over weight, then the battle shall be given to the cock that has won, even though he be overweight. In case the winning cock is overweight, and the opponent cock is a runaway, or dead, the battle is declared off, just as though it had never been fought.

Rule 12.—Cocks weighing within two ounces of each other are matched. Cocks weighing over 6.06 are shakes and match at catch weights.

Blinkers and stags are allowed four ounces by a perfect cock.

Blinkers and stags match at equal weights give or take two ounces.

Rule 13.—A pitter shall compel his opponent to bill the cocks a time or so before pitting; and cocks must be pitted fairly on their feet at all times, six feet apart, except during the instances specified in Time and Count. When cocks are being

pitted beak to beak, they must be pitted with one hand, and it under the cock.

When cocks are ordered pitted beak to beak, the judge shall require them pitted beak to beak, and not side ways, or breast to breast, or out of distance to peck. Cocks pitted contrary to this rule should be promptly ordered repitted, and the pitters cautioned not to repeat the act.

When pitting a cock, the pitter must not shove or hold his cock, but must take his hands off the cock promptly as soon as placed on the score mark when ordered by the judge to Pit.

Rule 14.—In hack fighting, if a cock refuses to fight at the commencement of the fight, and before having struck a blow, the fight and all bets are off. Should a cock, in main, refuse to fight, he loses the battle. Pecking, pecking at, striking, striking at, and chasing his opponent, counts as fighting.

Rule 15.—The judge, when required, may suffer a pitter to call in some of his friends to assist in catching the cock, who are to retire immediately when the cock is caught, and in no other instance is the judge to suffer the pit to be broken.

Rule 16.—The Rest after handling between pittings is 30 seconds, and the pitters must hold the cocks during the Rest, so that the judge can see them at all times, and with their heads exposed.

Rule 17.—If a pitter is in doubt as to whether the cocks are hung, he must get permission from the judge to handle. The pitters must handle promptly when a cock is hung in himself,—the other cock the ground, or side of pit. The pitter always pulls the gaff out of his own cock when hung by catching the other cock below the knee; should he have occasion to put his hand on the other cock, he must do so with open hand.

Rules 18—A cock that can see, or if blind, that carelessly walks away from the opponent cock in battle, shall not be declared a "runaway cock." A cock must actually run, or if so badly wounded that he cannot run, he must show distinct signs of running to be declared a "runaway cock." A blind cock is pitted at all time, just the same as a cock that can see.

Rule 19.—Should a cock that has secured the Count, begin to carelessly walk about and away from his opponent cock, and continues to do so during the battle, and the opponent cock is too weak to break the Count, then the judge will continue to Count for the cock that is walking (not running away), to the end of Count. As soon as Count is finished, the judge shall order the gaffs cut off the cock that walked away, and the judge shall order an outside cock brought into the pit, and shall order him pitted to beak, against this cock that

walked away. If this cock that has walked away, then shows fight in this one pitting the judge shall declare him the winner of the battle. If he does not show fight, then the opponent cock wins the battle. But if he don't show fight in this test, he shall be deemed as a runaway, and the opponent cock wins this battle, if he is a living cock at the time of this test, and not a runaway himself.

Rule 20—In pulling the gaffs, cocks must be held steady by the pitters, and the gaffs pulled gently out of the cocks, as they lay on, or near the ground.

Rule 21.—These rules do not permit giving a cock a wing or turning him over when on his side or back; nor shall a pitter pull out, or cut feathers off a broken wing of a cock in battle; nor shall he cut off a wing, toe, or any part of comb or gill during a battle.

Rule 22. Cocks when once pitted beak to beak, in either Time or Count, will be continued pitted beak to beak until end of fight.

Rule 23.—If both cocks are dying when Count or Time is given, the judge shall not stop to see which cock will die first; but, judge shall continue to have the cocks pitted to the end of either Count or Time, just as if nothing unusual was transpiring. During these pittings, the judge shall enter the pit and stand close to the cocks,

with cocks in full view of him, and the very instant one cock dies, the judge shall declare the opponent cock the winner. If both cocks are living at the end of Time, the battle shall be declared a draw.

Rule 24.—TIME:—When cocks stop fighting, and neither has the Count, the judge will give (or one of the pitters can demand it), Time of thirty seconds, three times, with the Rest of thirty seconds between each pitting.

Rule 25.—In giving Time, the first Time will be given with the cocks remaining in the positions where they have ceased fighting. The second Time, cocks will be pitted beak to beak. Third Time, cocks will again be pitted beak to beak, and if neither cock fights during this period of three Times, the fight shall be declared a draw. If one of the cocks fight before completion of Time, then Time is broken (discontinued), and Count is given. If Time is broken by cocks fighting, when given again, the cocks must be pitted through the three Times as at the commencement of each first time. At commencement of battle, no Time can be given when cocks have not struck a blow. ~~Time can be given when cocks are first pitted that have not struck a blow.~~

Rule 26.—If both cocks cease fighting, or are in a dying condition, and neither cock has been given the Count or can take it, Time is given and continued to the end,

when the fight will be declared a draw. If one of the cocks dies before the completion of Time, the fight shall be given to the living cock as soon as his opponent dies. If both cocks are running at the end of last Time, the fight shall be declared a draw.

Rule 27.—COUNT—The Judge shall do the counting at all times. The counting must be done in a distinct, deliberate manner with the object of having each Ten cover ten seconds, and the Twenty Count, twenty seconds, as near as possible.

A pitter loses his right to Count if he does not ask for it promptly after his cock has fought.

Rule 28.—The pitter of the cock that fights last, can call for the count of three Tens, and a Twenty, with the Rest of thirty seconds between each Ten, and the Twenty.

When pitted for the Twenty Count, the cocks will be pitted beak to beak.

The fight will be awarded against the cock that is being counted out, and does not fight during the successive counts of three Tens, and the Twenty.

Rule 30. If during the progress of Count, the cock that is being counted out fights before the Twenty Count is reached, the Count is broken, (discontinued), and when pitted again they are pitted on their scores six feet apart,—if the Count is not broken until the Twenty Count is reached, they are pitted beak to beak at every pitting un-

til the fight is ended.

Cocks when once pitted beak to beak, in either Time or Count, will be continued pitted beak to beak until end of fight.

Rule 31. Should a cock that is taking the Count get hung, the cocks must be handled promptly and pitted at once on the same scores as at the commencement of the pitting, and the count continued from where left off when handled.

Rule 32.—If a cock, that the Count has been given to, runs away during the Count, he loses it as soon as he runs, and the Count is at once given to the opponent cock, if not running himself,

The judge shall commence to count for the opponent cock immediately, even though such cock be so badly wounded he cannot take it, and the judge will continue to Count until the Count is either broken, or the running cock is counted out. If the cock that is given the Count, dies before the completion of same, and the opponent cock is still running away, then the fight shall be declared a draw.

To the Fraternity:

I am always open to conviction, and when I see the advisability of matching cocks for mains without taking descriptions. I admit that this method is the best. I have also changed my rules, and I ask all my friends and cockers to cast aside the rules given in the old booklet, and if they feel disposed,

use these rules I now give to the public, which are far more compact and correct. They may at first glance, look to be too long. I claim cocks can be fought under them quicker than under any other rules in use. It is only necessary to learn to use **Count** and **Time,** in order to fight cocks successfully by these rules. Other laws laid down, come up only occasionally, and when these points arise, there is always a law to govern the judge's action and decision.

Without any degree of egotism, I claim McCall's rules to be the most perfect ever written. After many corrections, and with the utmost care, I have perfected them. They cover plainly every point known to me in cock-fighting. The good points of other rules have been adopted, the faulty ones eliminated, and others added that I believe to be correct. The especial points to be observed in these rules are:

First—They do not permit giving a cock a wing or turning him over when on his back. If a feeder has his cocks in good condition, so strong that they can knock their opponents down, then why should they not be entitled to this advantage without a pitter stepping in and assisting? If such is allowed, then your cock is not only fighting the cock, but the cock with assistance of the pitter combined. They eliminate all disputes as regards the pitter lifting a cock on his feet in giving him a wing.

Cocks have been fought under this rule

with the utmost satisfaction in the pits of New Orleans and St. Louis, and in all my tournaments. In fact, this is one of the strongest points in favor of these rules. To such cockers, who have been for years using "rough-house rules" as I term it, where cocks are given wings, and turned over when on their back, I especially invite their attention to this splendid rule, that is equally fair to both cocks, and certainly eliminates all unnecessary wrangling, and all chances for claiming fouls, that so often occur under the old rule.

Second—They prevent the trimming of hackles or feathers around their head. If you cut a cocks' hackle entirely off, and I do the same, has any one gained any advantage over the other? All that there is to it, we have both equally succeeded in mutilating our birds during the cold months by following a foolish and an old antiquated custom.

Third—Under these rules, all counting is done by the judge. This is a very important rule. Rules that give pitters the right to do the counting, in my opinion, invite wrangles, and are extremely faulty. They prevent both pitters from trying to take the Count at the same time. They also prevent the ridiculous practice of pitters counting cocks out with lightning-like rapidity of speech, that even the glib-tongued auctioneer would seem slow in comparison. Such unfair tactics are too ridiculous almost for

sane consideration.

Fourth—They place a blind cock in his proper sphere. They eliminate all discussion as to whether he is a blind cock or not. If a cock goes into battle with his sight, and your cock by scientific fighting has succeeded in knocking his eyes out, then why should he not be entitled to this advantage? To pit them breast to breast, because one is blind, is only another instance of your cock having to fight his opponent, with the assistance of the pitter combined.

Fifth—They give the pitters the right to handle as soon as the cocks are hung; and not compel him to have to wait until a long useless forty Count, or any other Count is finished, with cock being dragged about the pit, with head gaffed and neck twisted.

Sixth—They give the pitter the right to the Count when his cock has fought last, whether he is touching his opponent or not. It is too absurd for discussion to say that a pitter is barred from being given a Count, simply because cocks may be touching at the time his cock has fought last.

Seventh—They prevent any possible chance of a runaway cock winning over a badly wounded game cock, or as for that matter, winning at all.

Eight—These rules lay down the law so clearly as regards how to deal with a dead, dying, or runaway cock, that it is impossible for any intelligent judge to err. They

give cocks a chance to win on their merits, and leave but little encouragement to the pitter looking to win on fouls, technicalities and "rough-house" tactics.

Ninth—They do not allow a fresh cock to be brought into the pit to decide a battle between two cocks, that have equally proved courageous, and have fought to the end, until both cocks will fight no longer. Why should not this battle in justice to both these cocks end in a draw, at the end of third Time, when both have failed to fight? A fresh cock may peck with such viciousness, as to still render one wounded cock less liable to peck, in fact, about kill him, while on the other hand, he may peck the opponent cock on the hackle feathers, that won't hurt him, and yet causes him to fight. A rule that requires a fresh cock to be brought into the pit to decide this fight in this instance, is preposterous. An outside cock should only be brought into the pit to test the gameness of a cock carelessly walking about and around the pit, when he has previously secured the Count over a badly wounded cock that can not break it.

If cockers desire to squabble over weight, and are taking chances of getting three ounces advantage instead of two, I would advise them then, never to attempt to use these rules. I have always thought it was debatable whether it was not wrong to give as much as two ounces in weight to cocks

weighing less than 5 pounds. But to give three ounces, which I see so often done under other rules, is too absurd for serious comment.

Cheap scales that do not weight cocks precisely at actual weight, should never be used. I have often witnessed gentlemen fighting mains for thousands of dollars, and using scales fit only to weigh worthless articles. In my tournaments, I use **Fairbanks** scales with utmost satisfaction. A cowpea will make them break. They are reasonable in price, and cost here in New Orleans only $6.50. These are even balance scales No. 8, 10 pound capacity, two iron plates furnished with side beam: graduated 1-4 ounce; no scoop. I only give this information about scales to assist cockers.

As a whole, these rules are entirely different from all other rules, as any one will readily see who carefully scrutinizes them, or compares them side by side with other rules.

SOL. PATRICK McCALL.